ENERGY BARS...GRAB AND GO

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Energy bars are increasing in popularity not only with sports enthusiasts but with people on the go. They easily fit in a briefcase, sports bag, or purse and provide a convenient and nutritious snack. The bars should not replace well balanced meals but they can provide quick energy before a workout or a long commute home.

The energy bars vary greatly in their composition. Let's look at a few examples of the most popular bars currently on the market.

Energy Bar	Carbohydrate (grams)	Sugar (grams)	Protein (grams)	Fat (grams)
POWER BAR	45	14	10	2
PR BAR	19	17	14	6
HARVEST	45	16	7	4
BALANCE BAR	22	18	14	6
CLIF BAR	51	15	4	3
PURE PROTEIN	13	10	30	4

Energy bars consist of two basic types: high carbohydrate or high protein. If you are eating meat and drinking milk, the excess protein obtained from a high protein energy bar is not needed. In fact, excess protein can stress the kidneys. These high protein bars should only be used by those whose diet does not contain adequate protein, such as strict vegetarians who do not consume any animal or animal by-products such as milk, eggs, or cheese.

Check the amount of sugar in the energy bar you choose. The total grams of sugar should be no more than one half (50%) of the total grams of carbohydrate, as excess sugar can lead to fluctuating blood sugar levels. To calculate the percentage of sugar in an energy bar, simply divide the grams of sugar by the total grams of carbohydrate and multiply by 100. Examples: for Power Bar $\frac{14 \text{ grams}}{45 \text{ grams}} \times 100 = 31\%$

Balance Bar $\frac{18 \text{ grams}}{22 \text{ grams}} \times 100 = 82\%$

Finally, do not forget to consider the cost. Energy bars are high in price compared to an equal amount of carbohydrate from other food sources such as crackers, bread, bagels, fruit and juices. You do not need to spend a lot of money to get the same carbohydrate benefit.